

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

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DRAFTED BY: S/S:FVORTIZ:GK

APPROVED BY: S/S:ORTIZ

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 304592 TOSEC 250073

NODIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT TEHRAN 12553 ACTION SECSTATE
30 DECEMBER 75.

QUOTE

S E C R E T TEHRAN 12553

NODIS

DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS TO SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, XF, IS, IR, US

SUBJECT: DISCUSSION WITH SHAH RE ASAD VISIT

REF: (A) STATE 302978

(B) STATE 303539

1. IN RESPONSE TO REFTELS (A) AND (B), SHAH SUMMONED ME
AFTERNOON DECEMBER 30 TO RELATE HIS TALKS WITH SYRIAN PRESIDENT
ASAD ON MIDDLE EAST NEGOTIATIONS. SHAH SAID HE HAD LENGTHY
DISCUSSION YESTERDAY WITH ASAD THROUGH INTERPRETER, BUT HIS
RECITAL TO ME WAS A BIT DISJOINTED BECAUSE OF SIDE FORAYS INTO
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IRAQ AND THE LEBANESE PROBLEM. THEREFORE, WHEN HE APPEARED

TO HAVE FINISHED DESCRIPTION OF DIALOGUE, I ASKED, "DO YOU THINK YOU MADE ANY PROGRESS WITH ASAD IN CONVINCING HIM TO MODIFY HIS HARD-LINE APPROACH?" THE SHAH REPLIED, "I BELIEVE I MADE A LITTLE PROGRESS. WHEN WE STARTED OUR CONVERSATION, ASAD WAS ADAMANT THAT NEGOTIATIONS WOULD HAVE TO TAKE PLACE IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL. BY THE TIME WE FINISHED HE SEEMED TO HAVE DECIDED THAT HE WOULD USE THE SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING TO EXPAND THE TERMS OF RESOLUTION 242 TO INCLUDE THE PALESTINIANS IN MIDDLE EAST NEGOTIATIONS. IF HE CAN ACHIEVE THIS IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL, HE WOULD THEN BE PREPARED TO SEE NEGOTIATIONS CONDUCTED IN ANOTHER FORUM OR UNDER OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES."

2. AS BEST I COULD PIECE TOGETHER THEIR DIALOGUE, SHAH AND ASAD TOOK OPPOSING POSITIONS WITH EACH OTHER PARTICULARLY AT BEGINNING OF THEIR TALK. SYRIA WANTED RECOGNITION OF THE PALESTINIANS WITH THE NEGOTIATIONS TO BE CONDUCTED IN THE UNITED NATIONS. WHEN SHAH POINTED OUT THAT THE UNITED STATES WOULD NOT PERMIT THIS, ASAD SHRUGGED HIS SHOULDERS AND REPLIED, "THE UNITED STATES WILL LOSE." SHAH RETORTED THAT IF INDEED THE UNITED STATES WERE TO LOSE, THAT WOULD LEAVE THE WORLD WITH ONE GIANT AND, WHAT WAS WORSE, A GIANT WITH WHOM "ONE CANNOT TALK, ONE CAN ONLY OBEY." (LATER IN THE AUDIENCE, THE SHAH REVERTED TO ASAD'S COMMENT ABOUT THE UNITED STATES "LOSING" AND COMMENTED, "I WONDER IF ASAD REALLY FOCUSES ON THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE U.S. LOSING. IS HE DESPERATE, OR DOES HE SPEAK WITHOUT THINKING OF THE FUTURE?) THERE ENSUED A DISCUSSION OF WHETHER OR NOT IT WAS POSSIBLE FOR SOME OTHER NATION TO REPRESENT THE PALESTINIANS. ASAD APPARENTLY WOULD NOT ACCEPT THIS FORMULA. HE INSISTED ON GOING TO THE UNITED NATIONS. SHAH ATTEMPTED TO CONVINCE HIM THAT THE UNITED STATES CAN ONLY ACCOMPLISH SO MUCH AND IN THE POST-VIETNAM ERA CAN ONLY OPERATE WITHIN CERTAIN LIMITS. IN OTHER WORDS, THE SYRIANS SHOULD NOT EXPECT TOO MUCH. ALSO, THERE WAS TALK BACK AND FORTH TO NO CONCLUSION ON THE SUBJECT OF "WHAT IS PALESTINE". THE SHAH THREW ASAD VARIOUS FORMULATIONS INCLUDING ONE IN WHICH SYRIAN TERRITORY WAS INVOLVED. ASSAD DID NOT REACT ONE WAY OR THE OTHER EVEN AT THE INFERENCE THAT TO CREATE A PALESTINIAN

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STATE, IT MIGHT BE NECESSARY TO INCLUDE SOME SYRIAN LAND.

3. THERE SEEMS NO DOUBT THAT THE SHAH MADE AN HONEST EFFORT TO SOFTEN UP ASAD. THE EXTENT TO WHICH HE SUCCEEDED WILL POSSIBLY EMERGE IN DUE COURSE. IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT THE SYRIANS WILL INSIST AT THE JANUARY 12 SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING THAT RESOLUTION 242, WHICH NOW CONTAINS NO MENTION OF THE PALESTINIANS, BE BROADENED TO GIVE THEM A PLACE IN

THE NEGOTIATIONS. WHETHER OR NOT THE UNITED STATES AND
THE ISRAELIS WILL AGREE TO A PROPOSAL OF THIS KIND IS
OBVIOUSLY NOT KNOWN TO EITHER SHAH OR ASAD, BUT
INFERENTIALLY ONE GETS THE IMPRESSION FROM THE SHAH THAT
THIS IS SOMETHING THE US AND THE ISRAELIS MIGHT CONCEDE IN
LIGHT OF VARIOUS PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY CERTAIN AMERICAN AND
ISRAELI LEADERS. YOU KNOW FAR BETTER THAN ANYONE ELSE
WHETHER IT IS A PIPE DREAM.
HELMS UNQUOTE ROBINSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TOSEC, CAT-C, UNSC RESOLUTIONS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 DEC 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MartinML
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE304592
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: S/S:FVORTIZ:GK
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: N750006-0733
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 2
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t1975127/aaaaafnb.tel
Line Count: 124
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Reference: 75 STATE 302978
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MartinML
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 AUG 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <07 AUG 2003 by izenbei0>; APPROVED <26 NOV 2003 by MartinML>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: LOCK1
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DISCUSSION WITH SHAH RE ASAD VISIT
TAGS: PFOR, OVIP, XF, IS, IR, US, SY, UNSC, (PAHLAVI, MOHAMMAD REZA), (ASAD, HAFIZ)
To: SECRETARY
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006